

Writing and Publishing a Family History

Darcy Boock, Joan Guckenberger, and Eileen Lund-Johnson

St. Croix Valley Genealogical Society

21 November 2019

Writing Software

- **Microsoft Word** — composition (layout and design limited); indexing possible
- **Microsoft Publisher** — page layout and design great, but no indexing software

Beginner's Guide to Microsoft Publisher 2018 Tutorial

www.youtube.com/watch?v=CgoOPVhBFYI

- **Scrivener** for Windows and Mac
www.literatureandlatte.com/scrivener/overview
 - A license is tied to the pc, not the person. So, if someone obtains a different pc, they cannot transfer the installation and license to a new machine. They do, retain the files that were created on the old pc, just not the software used to produce the writing.
 - \$45 Windows
 - \$49 Mac
 - \$19.99 iPad, iPhone, iPod
- **Print on Demand/Self-Publishing**
 - Lulu <http://www.lulu.com/create/books> Sizes available are 6 x 9" Perfect Bound, 8.5 x 11" Perfect Bound, 8.5 x 11" coil bound, 8.5 x 11" saddle stitch, 8.5 x 8.5" Perfect Bound
 - Barnes & Noble Press <https://press.barnesandnoble.com/>
 - PrintMyGenealogy <https://www.printmygenealogy.com/>
 - UBuildABook <https://www.ubuildabook.com/>

Books

- *Producing a Quality Family History*, by Patricia Law Hatcher, CG. ©1996 by Ancestry Incorporated, Salt Lake City, Utah
- *Genealogical Writing in the 21st Century: A Guide to Register Style and More*, edited by Michael J. Leclerc and Henry B. Hoff. ©2006 by New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Massachusetts
- *Carmack's Guide to Copyright & Contracts: A Primer for Genealogists, Writers & Researchers*, by Sharon DeBartolo Carmack, CG. ©2005, Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland
- Dina C. Carson books (Iron Gate Publishing):
 - *Publish a Biography: A Step-By-Step Guide to Capturing the Life and Times of an Ancestor or a Generation*
 - *Publish Your Genealogy: A Step-By-Step Guide for Preserving Your Research for the Next Generation*
 - *Publish Your Family History: A Step-By-Step Guide to Writing the Stories of Your Ancestors*
 - *Set Yourself Up to Self-Publish: A Genealogist's Guide*

Blogs/websites/Webinars

- Blog: the Armchair genealogist, Lynn Palermo, explains Scrivener <https://www.thearmchairgenealogist.com/p/im-always-on-lookout-for-new-writing.html>
- Scrivener on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4t7Rwgn6G4I> Lynn Palermo
- Cyndi's List — Writing Your Family's History <https://www.cyndislist.com/writing/>
- Thought Company: Family History Publishers and Print on Demand Services <https://www.thoughtco.com/family-history-publishers-1422317>
- Lisa Alzo <https://www.lisaalzo.com/seminars/webinars-for-genealogists/>
- Legacy Family Tree Webinars <https://familytreewebinars.com> Search categories on *Writing* and *Writing and Publishing*. Free anytime if you are a subscriber to Legacy or watch live webinars that are free at the time of presentation
- Reedsy blog: How to Write a Book in 2019: 9 Simple Steps for New Writers <https://blog.reedsy.com/how-to-write-a-book/>
- Reedsy blog: The 12 Best Self-Publishing Companies of 2019 <https://blog.reedsy.com/best-self-publishing-companies/>
- Adazing : The Top 10 Self-Publishing Companies <https://www.adazing.com/best-self-publishing-companies/>
- International Standard Book Number (ISBN) <http://isbn.org>

Parts of a Book

- Cover
- Front Matter (lower case Roman numerals as page numbers)
 - Title Page (right-hand page/odd-numbered)
 - Copyright page (located on back of title page)
 - Copyright <http://www.copyright.gov>
 - What is copyright? <https://www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/copyright-for-genealogists/>
 - What does it cost to copyright my work? <https://www.wellsiplaw.com/how-much-does-a-u-s-copyright-registration-cost/>
 - Dedication page (right-hand page/odd-numbered)
 - (Table of) Contents (start on right-hand/odd-numbered page; generate when book is completed)
 - Preface (why you wrote the book; may include acknowledgments); right-hand page
 - Introduction (what the reader needs to know before reading your book: your research methods, sources used in general, use of maiden names, date format used, etc.); right-hand page
- Main Text (paginated)
 - Parts or chapters — start each chapter on a right-hand or odd-numbered page)
- Back Matter
 - Endnotes (your source citations) arranged by chapters
 - Appendices (Appendix A, Appendix B, etc.); start each appendix on right-hand page
 - About the Author
 - Index (generate when book is completed and proofed); right-hand page

Style Guide for Writing

Consistent rules you will follow in writing your book

- Page set-up:
 - Book Size
 - Full page or columns
 - Margins
- Fonts — body of text, captions, transcriptions and translations, quotations, etc.
- Headings and subheadings font and size
- Spacing for body of text, captions, etc.
- Ragged text or justified margins?
- Format for dates (European style of day – month spelled out or 3-letter abbreviation – year)
- Use of hyphens (avoid as much as possible), en dashes (– between dates, such as 1889–1984) and em dashes (— with a space preceding and following used between two parts of a sentence)
- Words in another language in *italics*
- Use of brackets for the meaning of words in another language and [*sic*]
- Other punctuation: commas, apostrophes, etc.
- Spell out numbers one through ten; use numerals for 11 and above
- Internet words: online, email, Internet, website, web address
- Include source citations as endnotes at the end of each chapter or at the end of the book arranged by chapter
- Photos and other images — vary the sizes to make for a more interesting book
- Family charts

Suggested Items to Include in Your Family History

- Census records
- Obituaries, anniversaries, and other newspaper articles
- Maps: plat maps; maps showing ancestral villages
- Church records from the homeland and here in the United States
- Immigration information
- Naturalization records
- Charts: pedigree charts and family group charts
- City directory information
- Letters
- Military records
- Gravestone photos and death records
- PHOTOS (old postcards)
- History
- Genealogy quotes
- Sources

Helpful Resources for Writing and Publishing a Family History

The Family History Guide – <https://thefhguide.com/>

- Click on **FamilySearch**, then “**SEARCH**” **Publishing a Family History**

Publish a Family History: Findmypast Project 5, Goal 4

<https://www.thefhguide.com/project-5-help-fmp04.html>



Creating an organized and published **history** of your **family** can be an inspiration for generations to come. You can **publish** it online or in printed format, and there ...

The Family History Guide

<https://www.thefhguide.com/project-5-help-mh03.html>



Goal 3: Collaborate with others doing **family history** work. Vault ... AC—Quick Ways to Share **Family History**—15:31 ... GC—
Publishing a One-Family Periodical ...

Individual Activities: Documenting the Past - The Family History Guide

<https://www.thefhguide.com/act-individuals04.html>



Nothing makes **family history** more meaningful than personal involvement. ... Find help from Ancestry for **publishing a Family History**
Book in Project 5, Goal 6 of ...

Remembering Memories – The Family History Guide Blog

<https://www.thefhguide.com/blog/remembering-memories/>



Jul 21, 2018 ... Both **family history** and family stories are your gift to your posterity. ... You can **publish** them on FamilySearch, Family
Tree, or other genealogy ...

RootsTech.org 2019 videos: <https://www.rootstech.org/category/2019-rootstech-sessions>

- Writing and Publishing a Family History: 10 Steps - Penelope Stratton
- How to Write Your Life Story in 5 Pages or Less - Alison Taylor
- Why and How to Put Yourself into Your Family History: Scott Fisher, Amy Johnson Crow, Curt Witcher
- Uncovering Family Stories with British and Irish Historic Newspapers: Myko Clelland
- Families Discovering Family History Together - Nicole Dyer, Jana Greenhalgh, Olivia Jewell

Other Sources:

<https://www.cyndislist.com/writing>